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Key to the City of Pála Jakállá

The capital city of Jakášha Province, Pála Jakállá is situated on the headland between the estuaries of the Missúma and Ranánga rivers. The walls encompass eight hills that rise above the low country of the Flats of Tsechélnu, with the necropolis built on a ninth. Pála Jakállá had a population of some 45,000 at last census (in 2350 AS).

Some say that this was the original site of the great metropolis of Jakállá—hence the name, which means "Yesterday" Jakállá. The noted scholar Nyélme hiSuriúkhoi asserts that in the course of several Ditlána the site of the city has gradually shifted. However, a shift of forty tsán across a major river is somewhat hard to credit. More credible is the theory that this was the original Jakállá of very ancient times, a title usurped for the current site after the collapse of the Three States of the Triangle.

The mouth of the Missúma River is ideal as a staging post for goods coming down from the interior of the empire. Positioned as it is, the city receives a large proportion of the goods shipped from the hinterland for transportation along the coast or export overseas. Since the river is the easiest method of transporting goods to the capital, the markets of Pála Jakállá are well stocked with exotic goods of all sorts.

Vade mecum

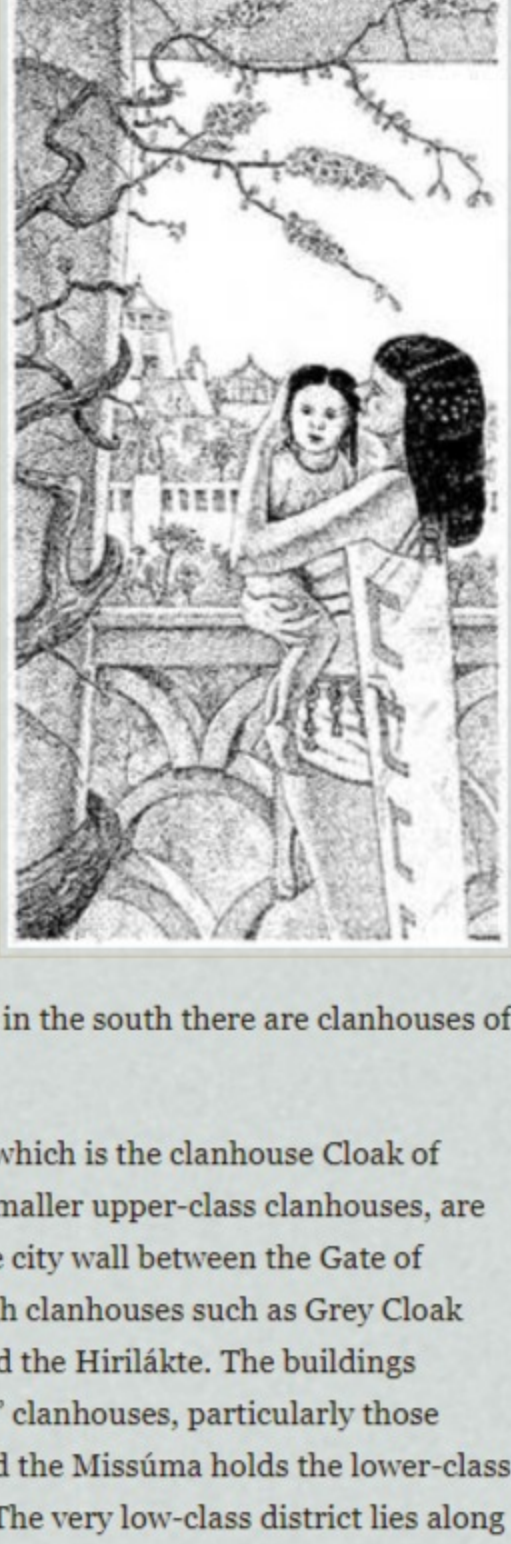
Several noble clans have houses here. Alongside those usually to be found in the south there are clanhouses of the ito and the Blade Raised High.

Most houses of the noble clans are clustered around the hill on the top of which is the clanhouse Cloak of Azure Gems. Many private mansions and palaces, as well as some of the smaller upper-class clanhouses, are situated on the hill where the Tower of Tanmrúktu stands. The area by the city wall between the Gate of Supernal Wisdom and the Gate of Bushétra contains most of the other high clanhouses such as Grey Cloak and Red Sword. The upper-middle class district comprises the area around the Hirilákte. The buildings between the Governor's Palace and the Market Square are mostly artisans' clanhouses, particularly those associated with the finer arts and crafts. The area between the temples and the Missúma holds the lower-class clanhouses, along with some small and rather shabby private residences. The very low-class district lies along the walls next to the Fish Market.

Within the Foreigners' Quarter, the various nationalities and nonhuman species congregate together in their own little enclaves. Páchi Léi, Swamp Folk, Ahoggyá and Shén are all to be found here (though not in great numbers). There are people from virtually any place in the known world that has a coastline—even the occasional barbarian from as far away as the Nyémesel Isles.

The area surrounding the city is flat and very fertile, benefitting from the fertile silt laid down by both rivers. There are extensive rice paddies, of course, as well as a few specialist crops that are grown almost exclusively in this region.

Away from the city walls the rural population is fairly dense at some seventy people per square kilometre, with towns and villages scattered about the area. Because of the nature of the crops, the peasants here tend to be somewhat better off than their cousins elsewhere in the Empire.



Map of Pála Jakállá
[click to enlarge]

These are some of the principal clanhouses and buildings of the city (click on the map left to open a large version):

- 1. Clan of Sea Blue** The traditional lords of the south, tracing their ancestry back to the Bednálljan royal family. Many members are highly-placed bureaucrats, army officers and priests.
- 2. Clan of the Golden Bough** A southern noble clan with Engsvanyáli roots. It has strong influence in the bureaucracy, and locally many clan-members are high in the Palace of War.
- 3. Clan of the Golden Sunburst** Another Engsvanyáli noble clan, even more aristocratic than Golden Bough. The local lineages are especially wealthy, and its members prefer to exercise power through patronage and indirect influence rather than seeking public office.
- 4. Clan of the Might of Ganga** A noble clan with strong links to the priesthoods of Belkhánu, Avánthe, Thúmis and Hnálla.
- 5. Clan of the Cloak of Azure Gems** A noble clan who trace their history back to Ksáruł's officers at the Battle of Dormorón Plain. Some members worship Hnúú.
- 6. Clan of the Blade Raised High** Descended from the palace guards of Engsvanyáli times, this Karakán-worshipping clan is strongest in the mid-west.
- 7. Clan of the Jade Diadem** Another noble clan containing many city officials. Most members are followers of Dlamélish and Hriháyal.
- 8. Clan of the Rising Sun** A high clan comprising upper class merchants and some minor landed nobles.
- 9. Clan of the White Crystal** A venerable Jakállan clan with houses right up the Missúma river.
- 10. Clan of the Joyous of Vrá** Descendents of the old Vrayáni nobility, principally devoted to Hnálla, Belkhánu and Thúmis. This clan maintains a legion (the Third Imperial Slingers) and also includes many medium-level priests and bureaucrats.
- 11. Clan of the Staff of Beneficence** A small clan of high status whose members revere Thúmis and Keténgku. Contains many wealthy physicians, apothecaries and scholars.
- 12. The Council of the Clans** A kind of guildhall used for meetings of the mercantile clans when thrashing out pricing agreements. Various celebrations are also held here, in particular the fertility rituals of the temple of Avánthe.
- 13. The Shipyards of Hagárr** The base for two cohorts (800 men) of the Squadrons of Tlanéno the Steersman. There are also several commercial and Imperial shipyards, which produce both sea-going and river vessels.
- 14. Clan of the Emerald Girdle** A prestigious land-owning clan whose main centre of power lies upriver, although there are often members visiting the area because of the large volume of trade they are involved in. Thus the clanhouse has only a dozen permanently resident members, but with staff and accommodation sufficient to support up to fifty more.
- 15. Palace of Jedusáne Tlakotáni** See Notable Personalities below.
- 16. Clan of the Standing Stone** A high clan which maintains its own legion: the Second Imperial Slingers, based in the city of úrmish. Members of the clan include priests, bureaucrats, soldiers and farmers.
- 17. Blue Kirtle Clan** A medium-status clan devoted to Avánthe. Locally the clan specialises in winemaking, though some members are priests and bureaucrats.
- 18. Clan of Sweet Decay** A Sáрку-worshipping clan of medium status, but with only one house in the whole empire. They specialize in the distillation of fine brandies from másh-fruit brought down from the hills near Tumíssa. The clan have a secret method for treating the fruit on its journey south that imparts particular qualities to the flavour of the liquor obtained. The purists of Tumíssa insist that it is not truly másh brandy, but this lighter decoction is more to southern tastes, and people will pay a hundred Káitars for a bottle of the best vintages. Másh brandy is not the clan's only product; they also distil dátsu and brew ngálu (wine).
- 19. Clan of the Shaded Garden** A medium-status clan who brew and serve wine and faóz (rice-beer). The clan maintains public rooms where lower-class patrons can sit and drink, and a suite of guest chambers for more distinguished guests.
- 20. Clan of the Moon of Evening** A medium-status clan specialising in trade. The Yarisal lineage is famous for its wood carvers.
- 21. Green Malachite Clan** A clan with strong maritime links whose members include sailors, fishermen and rice farmers.
- 22. Clan of the Collar of Bronze** A wealthy but low-status clan devoted to the transport and sale of slaves.
- 23. Clan of the Green Tattoo** Another slavers' clan, but not so wealthy as the Collar of Bronze because their warrant permits only the sale of "foreign persons brought from overseas".
- 24. Clan of the First Moon** A medium-status mercantile clan. Some lineages have links to the Palace of Foreign Lands.
- 25. House of the Pleasant Hour** This is part of the Temple of Dlamélish. A trained priest or priestess can be hired for anything between 1 and 100 Káitars, depending on skill, comeliness and the services required.
- 26. Clan of the Ripened Sheaf** A prosperous middle-status clan devoted to farming and rural crafts. Smaller clanhouses are found in almost every village in these parts.
- 27. Clan of the Red Flower** A medium-status clan involved in shipping and foreign trade.
- 28. Armoury of the Red Eclipse** This is the house of a small local clan specialising in the production of armoury but unelaborate arms and armour. (The clan includes artisans who are able to work in iron and steel.)
- 29. Pyramid Tomb of Prince Bekundráne** This is the largest pyramid in the necropolis. Bekundráne was the third son of Sárandar II, who was killed in a rebellion by the people of Ngála, a ruined city some way to the southwest of Pála Jakállá. The tomb later fell into a state of serious disrepair, although it was not looted owing to a rumoured curse. It has recently been restored to some of its former glory by Májjáq Skendružhza.
- 30. Tower of Tanmrúktu the Astronomer**
- 31. Headquarters of the Omnipotent Azure Legion**
- 32. Weapon School of Makkúdzó the Salarvyáni** Unsurprisingly for a Salarvyáni-run school the speciality is Arruché (sword & dagger fighting), in which Makkúdzó is an acknowledged master. Other noble weapon-styles are also taught. Makkúdzó's prices mean that his school tends to be the preserve of the upper classes, but he has been known to take on the occasional promising but poor student at reduced fees. (Price for a two-hour lesson: 15 Káitars with Makkúdzó himself, 10 with a junior instructor.)
- 33. Gladiator School of Panú'ish Ketlán of Ssa'átis** Panú'ish is a former gladiator who made his fortune in the Hirilákte in Jakállá. His sponsors, the Clan of the Blade Raised High, set him up with this school after his retirement. Although his primary interest is in the training of gladiators for the Hirilákte, he can be prevailed upon to give private instruction. (A two-hour lesson costs 5 Káitars.)
- 34. The Palace of the Realm** The largest of the four bureaucratic Palaces in the city, overseeing local taxes, trade, civic upkeep and law enforcement.
- 35. The Palace of Ever-Glorious War** Deals with recruitment, supply, the Sákke guard units and maintenance of the city walls. (The units of the Squadrons of Tlanéno the Steersman who patrol the river report here, not to the Palace of the Realm.)
- 36. The Palace of Foreign Lands** Responsible for customs, foreign trade and shipping, and diplomatic relations.
- 37. The Palace of the Priesthoods** Responsible for temple tithes, public rituals and relations between the priesthoods and the state. The ecclesiastical courts are located here.
- 38. The Hirilákte** Because of the gladiator school there is a healthy level of activity at the arena, giving Panú'ish's pupils a taste of the big time before moving them on to the arenas of the great metropolises.
- 39. The Citadel of Hágarr** This citadel is of Bednálljan architecture, very solid and not particularly attractive. Its one claim to fame is that it has never fallen to a siege. That at least is what the locals claim, and certainly it has not happened in the history of the Second Imperium. It is used as a warehouse for essential supplies and any imported goods destined for the Imperial Coffers at Avanthár. This leaves a lot of unused space, most of which is left prepared for use as barracks in case Imperial troops should be billeted in the city.
- 40. The Isle of Torment** The prison for those convicted by both Imperial and civil courts. The guards comprise two Semétl (40 men) of the Legion of Kétl.
- 41. Mansion of Donmikáyel hiGángasa** See Notable Personalities below.

Foreigners' Quarter

42. The Palace of Winds Rest-house for foreigners of royal or noble status. Prices range from 50-100 Káitars per day.

43. The Tower of the Blue Dawn Rest-house for foreigners of high status. Costs 20-50 Káitars a day.

44. The Courtyards of Hirkáne Rest-house for foreigners of upper-middle status. Costs 10-20 Káitars a day.

45. Foreign merchants 'guild'

46. Ahoggyá enclave A high wall ameliorates the rank smell emanating from these thatched log-built abodes.

47. Shén enclave A high wall protects the faint-hearted from any sight of these terrifying creatures.

48. House of the Fulfilment of Dreams This bawdy house is owned by Májjáq Skendružhza and run by his brother-in-law, Zékkumet Ssámadan. They cater for all purses and tastes. Given enough time, Zékkumet will procure any type of pleasure or perversion his clients can afford. (The Temple of Dlamélish receives a 25% cut of the profits in return for allowing the House to remain open.)

49. Hostel of Buzhúnmra Rest-house for foreigners of middle status. Costs 1-10 Káitars a day.

50. Fazzhzá's House of Repose Rest-house for those of lower-middle status. Costs 1-20 Hlášh a day.

51. The Buzzing Domicile Rest-house for those of low status. Costs 1-20 Qirgáls a day.

Notable Personalities

Lord Jedusáne Tlakotáni (aged 45, status 20) The great-great-grandson of the 56th Emperor by a series of young women who served in the Legion of Ever-Present Glory under General Kéttukal. He treats this appointment extremely seriously, as it is the first time he has held political office. He is a member of the Red Sword clan (in which the Sukándar family is strongly represented) although originally of the Red Star clan.

Májjáq Skendružhza (aged 35, status 12) An extremely fat Salarvyáni merchant who is the head of the "guild" of the most merchants in the Foreigners' Quarter. He made his fortune in the shipping of rare woods and spices. He is the most influential foreigner in the city and is invited all the smart social functions. He has committed a good deal of his wealth towards the maintenance of the Imperial Fleet in Pála Jakállá and to various civic works.

Bénshatun hiZhámek (aged 28, status 10) The local Dlantú (Clan Chief) of the Clan of the Moon of Evening. He is extremely youthful for a Clan Chief, a situation which has come about because of the death in an epidemic of all the senior members of his lineage. He keeps a very high profile, hosting regular feasts to celebrate one event or another. These are regularly attended by most of the influential members of the upper-middle class.

Lord Donmikáyel hiGángasa (aged 25, status 15) Eldest son of the Chief of the Clan of the Might of Gánga in Pétris Layóda. He is currently District Commandant of the Temple of Hnálla in Pála Jakállá. He lives in a small mansion close to the Tower of Tanmrúktu with his two wives and two children. A poet of mediocre talent, he owns an extensive library of original editions of some of the standard works.

Tanmrúktu the Skywatcher (age unknown; status unclear) A foreigner who has been around for so long that nobody can remember where he came from originally. He lives in a high tower atop the highest of the city's hills. Candles can be seen burning in the windows of the tower long into the night. He is one of the most respected astrologers in the empire. Although he can only rarely be prevailed upon to cast horoscopes, he does produce charts for important occasions such as the birth of Imperial heirs. His methods of casting are somewhat different from the standard Engsvanyáli routines, but he seems to come up with similar results.

Kornámu hiVitëshmai (aged 26, status 9) A minor scion of the Golden Sunburst Clan who is employed as bodyguard by Lord Jedusáne Tlakotáni. He is an exponent of the hlēpurdál (two weapon) school of fighting, using not Arruché but a style he developed himself.

Lord Parshurái hiQolyélmú (aged 50, status 26) The local Chief of the Clan of the Blade Raised High. Rather plump, he looks young for his age and has many friends among the priestesses of Dlamélish and Hrihayal.

Dáusek hiParúdar (aged 60, status 26) The Chief of the Jade Diadem clan. He is a worshipper of Dlamélish and a renowned sorcerer. He is always accompanied by two exquisitely beautiful female slaves who wear tores, not of the customary bronze, but of steel.

Paránda hiSsanyúsa (aged 34, status 12) This redoubtable woman married into the Clan of the Cloak of Azure Gems. When her husband died she took Aridáni status and now involves herself in clan business. She is a worshipper of Avánthe and spent four years in the Legion of Lady Mrssa.

Korazánu hiVriddi (aged 30, status 15) A well known local duellist who has a reputation for iSsúing challenges to opponents who have virtually no chance of winning. He is overbearingly arrogant (like most Vriddi) and gives the impression of extreme ruthlessness. When he chooses, however, he can seem as charming as Lord Ksáruł himself.

Fasharánga the Neck-Breaker (aged 22, status 4) Nobody is quite sure of the origins or nationality of this gladiator. He was trained at the school of Panú'ish Ketlán, and is now under the patronage of the Clan of the Might of Gánga. He is famed for his utter savagery in combat; in one bout he almost tore his opponent's head from his shoulders. He has been to Jakállá and Béy Sú for bouts. He is immensely powerfully built, and by no means as stupid as his demeanour might suggest.

Ceremonies and holy days

1st Hasanpór: New Year's Day is celebrated with feasts and gift-giving.

2nd Shápru: A procession from the Council of the Clans, by way of the temples and the four Palaces, to the Governor's Palace marks the legendary date of the founding of the city.

25th Didóm: The Litany of Noble Deeds takes place at the temple of Karakán; a traditional date for youths to take their adult name.

3rd Langála: Feasts and elegant parties celebrate the Summer Solstice.

9th Drénggar: The Enhancement of the Emerald Radiance in praise of Dlamélish.

5th Firasúl: Autumn Equinox (also Shán New Year)

1st-10th Halir: Harvest festivals.

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